

DAVID LOEBSACK
2ND DISTRICT, IOWA

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEES:
MILITARY PERSONNEL
READINESS

EDUCATION AND LABOR
SUBCOMMITTEES:
HEALTH, EMPLOYMENT, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS
EARLY CHILDHOOD, ELEMENTARY
AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1502

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1221 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-6576

DISTRICT OFFICES:
125 SOUTH DUBUQUE STREET
IOWA CITY, IA 52240
(319) 351-0789

150 1ST AVENUE NE
SUITE 375
CEDAR RAPIDS, IA 52401
(319) 364-2288
1 (866) 914-IOWA

September 19, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S House of Representatives
H-232 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi,

I write to continue bring to your attention bipartisan legislation I recently introduced, along with Rep. Jim Renacci and Rep. Mike Quigley, to inspire confidence in the Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction from the American people by requiring a high level of transparency for committee members and staff. Entitled the Deficit Committee Transparency Act, HR 2860, it is comprised of proposals to ensure the public has insight into how the committee will reach its important conclusions on at least \$1.2 trillion in deficit reduction by November 23, 2011.

There is near certainty the committee will be subject to intense pressure and you have no doubt seen a number of stories referencing the expected offensive strategies to try and influence the outcome of their deliberations. I believe that for the American people to have confidence in the committee's proceedings, outcome, and even a renewed confidence in Congress, the committee must ensure transparency when dealing with these important matters. The committee's members need to be free from undue influence and free to make decisions that are best for the country and not special interests.

Specifically, this legislation will require disclosure of meetings with special interests between committee members and staff on a committee website. It also requires disclosure of all campaign contributions from special interests as well as disclosure of any donation over \$500. To ensure the public can fully understand the committee's important proceedings, the legislation also requires creation of a committee website, that hearings be televised and streamed online, and that the proposed legislative language be published 72 hours before a vote occurs. It also requires disclosure of meetings before they occur within the 48 hours leading up to the vote so the public knows who is attempting to influence the committee's process even at the very end of deliberations.

I applaud the proposals adopted during the committee's first meeting last week and believe these are positive steps toward ensuring confidence in the committee's proceedings. Unfortunately, many of them fall short of the expectations of transparency I believe the American people are looking for from the committee. Furthermore, they also fall short of the transparency I believe is necessary to ensure a final product that is free from the question of undue influence and special interest intervention. I hear frequently from our constituents that they are tired of politicians making deals that benefit special interests over the good of the country.

Given the importance of their task and the need for the outcome of the committee to be supported in a bipartisan fashion that requires shared sacrifice and bipartisan compromise, Members of Congress and voters must have a high level of confidence in the committee's product and the process. I therefore hope you will urge the committee to proactively implement these measures. I also respectfully urge you bring up this much-needed legislation for a vote in the House as soon as possible.

With the short timeframe the committee has to develop a bipartisan proposal to reduce the deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion, it is more important than ever that a high level of transparency be required of the committee's and staff's meetings, campaign contributions, and interactions. The American people deserve no less.

I again respectfully urge you to bring this legislation up for a vote as soon as possible and urge committee members to proactively implement these common-sense provisions. Thank you for your time and consideration of these important matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dave Loebsack", with a stylized, cursive script.

Dave Loebsack
Iowa's Second District